

(Breakthrough, March 1986)

## **HEMI-SYNC® IN THE CLASSROOM**

*by Jo Dee Owens*

It's been almost three and a half years since I began using music with Hemi-Sync in the classroom. I use Hemi-Sync in that setting the same way it had originally been presented to me; with relaxation techniques and guided imagery along with cognitive material.

Utilizing music alone for relaxation and focusing was not a new idea for me. I had used relaxing music before with students in Junior high school creative writing classes and in primary grades for quiet time.

Imaging as a way of introducing cognitive material was not a strange process to me either. While working as a writer/producer for children's art programs on Educational Television, I did a comparative study using radio and TV for art instruction at the primary level. Eighteen classrooms were involved for one month. Some classrooms used radio as the means of art instruction while others used the television broadcast. The students listening to the radio were using an imagery process to learn and carry out a task. The results were interesting. The student art was evaluated by a panel of professional artists. The judges were totally unaware of how the artwork was accomplished, yet they consistently chose pictures from the radio art lessons.

When I first experienced Hemi-Sync and music together, I wanted to try it in the classroom. It was my good fortune to begin exploring this process in a Philosophy of Education class at Tacoma Community College with Prof. Devon Edrington. Since 1978, he had been using Hemi-Sync and music with his philosophy class, enhancing the cognitive learning process. Students utilized headsets in a lab setting, listening to Hemi-Sync mixed with music and cognitive material.

I left television and went to the classroom as a teacher—teaching split level first and second grade. Soon, I began using Hemi-Sync as it had been presented to me. The exception was that I used stereo speakers instead of headphones.

Within a year I was enjoying the benefits of a highly functional and creative classroom of first and second graders. I received recognition for my efforts. In the summer of 1984, it was recommended that test score data be used to substantiate the need for further study of the impact of Hemi-Sync and related instructional technology. That data supported the conclusion that my students did very well. But the recommendation further noted that whether her results are because of Hemi-Sync or related to superior teaching skills needs to be examined from the context of at least one other school setting.

In October of '84, Hemi-Sync was introduced into three other classrooms as a tool. Two of the classrooms were splits (2nd and 3rd grades and 4th and 5th grades) and one 6th grade. All the teachers initially experienced immediate benefits of a quieter environment, increased productivity and fewer class disruptions. After using the Hemi-Sync Synthesizer to change the atmosphere of the classroom, each teacher agreed to try imaging exercises in the area of Language Arts. Imaging proved to be a natural process to use once the students were focused.

The Synthesizers were utilized in the classroom through June of '85. The statistical results of this study (which include test score comparisons for each of the classrooms) are not available at this time, but will be in the near future.

The import of the results is that all teachers who participated in the study, whether they continued to use the Synthesizer or not, changed their system of management. I don't purport to evaluate whether the Synthesizer was a catalyst for change or not in these classrooms. However, the change did occur in the classrooms utilizing the Synthesizer.

At present, I am designing a curriculum of activities (called "Creative Self-Management") for presenting my ideas to other teachers so that my model can be tested for its effectiveness.

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